



LEICESTER THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS THROUGH NURTURE AND MINDSET

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy Owner	Leicester Therapeutic School
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ISS Regulatory Requirements	Part 1 - Quality of Education: paragraphs 2(2)(d)(ii) and 3(j) Part 2 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development: paragraph 5(b)(vi) Part 8 - Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Safeguarding at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are committed to providing an environment in which pupils feel safe and secure and are able to access their education. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff maintain an 'it could happen here' attitude and act promptly where they have concerns about a child's safety or welfare. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils, including protecting them from abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying and online harm. If anyone is concerned about something they read, witness or hear in relation to the school, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Headteacher immediately. Safeguarding and the wellbeing of pupils are central to all school policies and practice.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are passionate about providing an inclusive education for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We recognise and celebrate individuality and use personalised approaches, reasonable adjustments and an adapted curriculum so that pupils can participate, make progress and feel supported throughout the school day. We believe that, in the right environment and with the right support, pupils can flourish. SEND, accessibility and the removal of barriers to learning are central themes throughout school policy and practice. For more information, please read the school's SEND Information Report and Accessibility Plan.

1. Introduction

We welcome and comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 as an independent school and as an employer.

We believe that all pupils and members of staff should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background, identity or circumstances. We are committed to a community that recognises and respects difference, removes barriers and promotes dignity, fairness, safety and belonging.

This document sets out the principles that guide our work with pupils, families, staff, governors, professionals and the wider school community. It should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, anti-bullying, curriculum, accessibility and staff policies.

2. National and Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 applies to independent schools. In relation to pupils, the proprietor is the responsible body for compliance with Part 6 of the Act. The school must not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or prospective pupil in relation to admissions, the provision of education, access to a benefit, facility or service, exclusion, or by subjecting the pupil to another detriment. The school also has duties as an employer under Part 5 of the Act.

The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Age does not apply as a protected characteristic to pupils under the school education provisions. However, the Independent School Standards require the curriculum and wider school experience to encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to all protected characteristics in an age- and developmentally appropriate way. The school also recognises discrimination by association and perception and its duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.

Relevant law and guidance includes the Human Rights Act 1998; the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and DfE Independent School Standards guidance (April 2026); Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; the revised Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance applying from 1 September 2026; and Ofsted's non-association independent school inspection toolkit for use from 7 September 2026. We also have regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

3. Principles

As a non-state-funded independent school, Leicester Therapeutic School is not generally subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) specific duties that apply to state-funded schools. Where any function is subject to the PSED, the school will comply with that duty. In all cases, we voluntarily use the three PSED aims - eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations - as a helpful framework for decision-making and school improvement.

To fulfil our legal obligations, we are guided by a number of principles.

1. All pupils, families and staff are of equal value:

- We see all pupils, prospective pupils, their parents and carers, staff and other members of our school community as of equal value:
- Whether or not they are disabled or have special educational needs

- Whatever their race, ethnicity, culture, nationality or national origin
- Whatever their sex
- Whether they have, are perceived to have, or may be considering a process connected with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment
- Whatever their religion, belief or non-religious worldview
- Whatever their sexual orientation
- Whatever their marriage or civil partnership status, where relevant
- Whether they are pregnant or have recently given birth, where relevant
- Whatever their age, where relevant
- Whether or not they have a connection with the Armed Forces community
- Whether or not English is their first language

2. We recognise and respect difference

We recognise that treating people fairly does not always mean treating everyone in exactly the same way. Our policies, procedures, curriculum and day-to-day practice will take account of different needs and potential barriers while avoiding unlawful discrimination.

Disability - we make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, staff and other members of the school community where required. For pupils, this includes considering auxiliary aids and services, adapting practice and information, and implementing and regularly reviewing the school's Accessibility Plan so that disabled pupils can participate as fully as reasonably possible.

Sex - following the Supreme Court judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* [2025] UKSC 16, 'sex' for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 means biological sex. We recognise that girls and boys, and women and men, may have different needs in some contexts. Any different treatment will be considered carefully and must be lawful, necessary and proportionate.

Gender reassignment - gender reassignment remains a separate protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. A person is protected if they are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex. Gender questioning or gender identity is not itself a protected characteristic, although some gender-questioning pupils may have, or be perceived to have, the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Where this is unclear, the school will follow *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026* and proceed on the basis that the pupil may be protected.

Requests from pupils who are questioning their gender will be considered sensitively and case by case in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026*. Parents and carers will be involved as a priority unless doing so would place the child at risk. Decisions will consider the child's best interests, safeguarding, privacy and dignity, the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998, and the rights and welfare of other pupils. Single-sex toilets, changing facilities, sport and any overnight accommodation will be managed in line with *KCSIE 2026* and applicable legal requirements.

Religion or belief - we respect religious and non-religious beliefs and will consider reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice, while balancing them with safeguarding, curriculum and other legal duties.

Race - we recognise that people may have different experiences because of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin and we challenge racism and racial stereotyping.

Age - age is relevant to employment and to our wider community. It is not a protected characteristic for pupils in the school education provisions, and age-appropriate distinctions in education may be lawful.

Sexual orientation - we respect all sexual orientations and will not tolerate discrimination, bullying or disadvantage because of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or association with someone of a particular sexual orientation.

Marriage and civil partnership - this protected characteristic is relevant principally to employment. Staff will not be treated less favourably because they are married or in a civil partnership.

Pregnancy and maternity - we will not treat pupils, staff, parents or carers unlawfully or unfairly because of pregnancy or maternity and will make appropriate arrangements to support access, safety and wellbeing.

3. We foster positive attitudes and relationships and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging. Our policies, procedures, curriculum and activities will promote:

- positive and respectful interaction between people and communities with different backgrounds, beliefs, experiences and protected characteristics
- an environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, prejudice and discriminatory bullying.

4. We observe good equalities practice in relation to staff

We ensure that our employment policies and practices are applied fairly and consistently throughout recruitment, employment, development and the ending of employment, with reasonable adjustments for disabled staff. The school will take proactive steps to prevent harassment and sexual harassment at work. From 30 October 2026, in line with the Employment Rights Act 2025, the school will take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of employees and will comply with the obligation not to permit harassment of employees by third parties.

5. We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities avoid or minimise disadvantage and remove barriers wherever reasonably possible. We will consider whether rules or practices have an unintended discriminatory effect and, where appropriate, whether a less discriminatory way of achieving the same legitimate aim is available.

6. We consult and involve to ensure views are heard

When developing or reviewing policies and significant activities, we will seek the views of those affected where this is proportionate and useful. This may include pupil voice, parent/carer feedback, staff consultation, governor oversight and input from relevant professionals. Communication methods will be adapted to enable meaningful participation by pupils with SEND.

7. We aim to foster greater community cohesion

Our policies, curriculum and wider activities will foster belonging, respectful relationships and understanding between people from different backgrounds. We will provide pupils with opportunities to participate in school and community life and to learn about diversity in Britain and the wider world.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We use evidence to identify barriers, understand patterns and evaluate the impact of our practice. As an independent school, we do not present publication of equality information or equality objectives under the PSED specific duties as a statutory requirement. We nevertheless monitor equality and inclusion information proportionately and set school improvement objectives to support transparency and continuous improvement.

4. Application of the Principles within this Policy

The principles set out in this policy apply across all aspects of Leicester Therapeutic School.

They will be reflected in:

- Curriculum planning and delivery, including age-appropriate teaching about protected characteristics
- Teaching, learning and assessment, including reasonable adjustments
- Pupil progress, attainment, achievement and preparation for the next stage
- Teaching approaches, resources and representation
- Admissions, attendance and access to education
- Recruitment, employment, staff development and workplace culture
- Pastoral care, therapeutic support and safeguarding
- Partnership working with external professionals and agencies
- Behaviour, anti-bullying, restrictive interventions, suspension and exclusion decisions
- Partnership working with parents and carers
- Enrichment, educational visits and engagement with the wider community

5. Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-Related Bullying

The school is opposed to prejudice and discriminatory behaviour in all forms, including racist, sexist, disability-related, homophobic, biphobic, religion- or belief-related and gender-reassignment-related prejudice, as well as misogyny and other forms of discriminatory bullying. This includes conduct online and through technology. Incidents will be challenged, recorded and responded to under the school's behaviour, anti-bullying and safeguarding procedures, with safeguarding referrals made where appropriate.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The proprietor and governing body are responsible for seeking assurance that the school complies with relevant equality law and the Independent School Standards, that this policy is implemented effectively, and that leaders identify and address barriers to participation, unlawful discrimination and significant patterns in incidents or outcomes.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring staff understand their responsibilities, arranging appropriate training, overseeing reasonable adjustments and accessibility arrangements, and taking action where discrimination, harassment, victimisation or prejudice is identified.

All staff are expected to work in accordance with this policy and to:

- promote an inclusive, respectful and collaborative ethos
- challenge and report prejudice, discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- plan and deliver an inclusive curriculum which promotes respect for protected characteristics
- make and implement reasonable adjustments and support pupils with additional needs
- work constructively with families, colleagues, therapists, external professionals and the wider community.

7. Supporting Organisations and Guidance

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is Great Britain's independent equality and human rights regulator. It provides guidance on the Equality Act 2010, discrimination, reasonable adjustments and workplace harassment. The school will have regard to current EHRC guidance relevant to schools and employers.

www.equalityhumanrights.com

[GOV.UK - Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)

Department for Education and Ofsted guidance

Relevant guidance includes Equality Act 2010: advice for schools; Independent School Standards guidance (April 2026); Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; the statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance applying from 1 September 2026; and the non-association independent school inspection toolkit for use from 7 September 2026.

The school will use the most current versions of statutory and non-statutory guidance and will review this policy if material legal or regulatory changes occur before the scheduled review date.

Other organisations offering support and information

ACAS provides guidance for employers and employees on equality, discrimination, reasonable adjustments, harassment and workplace rights. The school will also use relevant DfE, Ofsted, ICO and safeguarding guidance where equality issues overlap with education, data protection or safeguarding.

www.acas.org.uk

8. Monitoring: Environment and Practice

The school will monitor equality and inclusion through policy review, governor oversight, curriculum and accessibility review, analysis of prejudice-related incidents and complaints, and consideration of relevant

patterns in attendance, behaviour, suspensions, exclusions, participation and outcomes. Monitoring will be proportionate, protect confidentiality and comply with data protection law.

Leicester Therapeutic School is an independent school. The PSED specific publication duties applying to state-funded schools are not generally applicable to the school. We nevertheless choose to set and review equality and inclusion objectives as good practice and as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework

Although Leicester Therapeutic School is not generally subject to the PSED specific duties applying to state-funded schools, we voluntarily use the three PSED aims as a practical framework for our equality and inclusion work:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity by identifying and reducing barriers, making reasonable adjustments and supporting participation and achievement.
3. Foster good relations by promoting respect, understanding, dignity and positive relationships between people with different characteristics and experiences.

Leicester Therapeutic School is an inclusive specialist school where differences are respected and the wellbeing, participation and progress of every pupil are central to our work.

We use the Equality Act 2010, the Independent School Standards, safeguarding requirements and our SEND duties as a framework for valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering respectful relationships. We will not lower expectations because of a protected characteristic or disability; reasonable adjustments are intended to remove barriers, not reduce ambition.

Our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

- All learners are of equal value.
- We recognise, respect and appropriately celebrate difference.
- We foster positive attitudes, respectful relationships and a shared sense of belonging.
- We apply fair and inclusive employment practices and take proactive steps to prevent harassment.
- We identify, reduce and remove inequalities and barriers wherever reasonably possible.
- We maintain high aspirations and expectations for every pupil from their individual starting points.

10. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

For pupils, Part 6 of the Equality Act protects against unlawful discrimination in relation to sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity. Age does not apply to pupils under the school education provisions. Marriage and civil partnership is principally

relevant to employment. The Independent School Standards nevertheless require pupils to be taught, in an age-appropriate way, to respect people with all protected characteristics.

In addition to protected characteristics, the school considers the needs and experiences of groups who may face disadvantage or additional barriers, including:

- Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and/or Pupil Premium funding
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Young carers
- Looked-after children (LAC)
- Previously looked-after children
- Pupils who have or have had a social worker
- Pupils from Armed Forces families
- Pupils affected by parental imprisonment or offending

11. Eliminating Discrimination

We work to prevent and eliminate discrimination by:

- Embedding equality, inclusion and respect within the school's ethos, safeguarding culture and leadership decisions.
- Using the Working Positively with Pupils Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and safeguarding procedures to help every pupil feel safe and respected.
- Recording, responding to and monitoring prejudice-related and discriminatory incidents, including online incidents, and identifying patterns or wider safeguarding concerns.
- Reviewing the curriculum, resources and wider opportunities so that they promote respect for protected characteristics, avoid harmful stereotypes and provide appropriate representation.
- Making reasonable adjustments and implementing the Accessibility Plan so that disabled pupils can access the curriculum, information, facilities, educational visits and wider school life.
- Listening to pupils, parents/carers, staff and professionals and using feedback to improve access, participation and outcomes.

12. Equality and Inclusion Objectives - September 2026 to September 2027

For the 2026/27 academic year, Leicester Therapeutic School has adopted the following equality and inclusion objectives. These are school improvement objectives and will be reviewed by leaders and governors during the year.

Objective 1 - Accessibility and participation: By July 2027, review the Accessibility Plan and reasonable-adjustment arrangements termly, recording actions taken to reduce identified barriers to curriculum access, information, facilities, trips and enrichment.

Objective 2 - Curriculum and representation: By July 2027, complete a curriculum and resource audit to confirm that pupils receive age- and developmentally appropriate opportunities to learn about all protected characteristics, challenge stereotypes and encounter a diverse range of people, cultures, faiths, beliefs and families.

- Objective 3 - Prejudice-related incidents: Review prejudice-related and discriminatory incidents at least termly, identify patterns and take targeted action through curriculum, pastoral support, safeguarding or staff training where required.
- Objective 4 - Workforce inclusion and harassment prevention: Provide annual equality and reasonable-adjustment training for staff and ensure the school's arrangements are ready for the employment-law changes taking effect on 30 October 2026, including the duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and the duty relating to third-party harassment.
- Supporting actions will include:
 - Regular pupil, parent/carer and staff consultation using accessible methods.
 - Assemblies, curriculum workshops and enrichment that develop respect for different cultures, faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.
 - Curriculum review to improve representation and challenge stereotypes while maintaining age-appropriate, factual and balanced teaching.
 - Disability and neurodiversity awareness embedded across the curriculum and staff development.
 - Regular review of the physical environment, equipment, information and communication methods to improve accessibility.
 - Strong pupil voice through the Junior Leadership Team and other pupil consultation opportunities.
 - Multi-agency working with SEND professionals, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Social Care, health services and other relevant professionals.
 - Relationships Education, PSHE and teaching about faiths and worldviews that supports respectful relationships and preparation for life in modern Britain.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

Equality and inclusion are monitored through governor oversight and the ongoing review of school policies and their implementation. Leaders will provide governors with proportionate, anonymised information on progress against the school's objectives and any significant patterns in prejudice-related incidents, complaints, attendance, behaviour, suspension/exclusion, accessibility or participation.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and earlier if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, the Independent School Standards, safeguarding requirements or the school's circumstances.

Key references include: Equality Act 2010; DfE Equality Act 2010: advice for schools; DfE Independent School Standards guidance (April 2026); Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026; statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance applying from September 2026; Ofsted non-association independent school inspection toolkit for use from September 2026; and current Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance for schools and employers.